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OPI REPORT

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Office of Public Instruction
Ed Argenbright
Superintendent

OPI Forms Agreement With Other State Agencies on Services to Handicapped

Representatives of the Office of Public Instruction, the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Family Services and the Department of Institutions have agreed to work toward serving severely handicapped children in Montana rather than in out-of-state placements. Under terms of the signed agreement, after July 1, 1988 out-of-state placements will be made only if (a) the placement is in a residential program closer to the family than an appropriate in-state facility or (b) the child's needs require placement in a specialized program that does not exist within the state and that cannot be readily developed in or transferred to Montana. Such placements will seek to return the child to a non-institutional setting within the state with an established transition plan.

Any out-of-state placement will be approved in advance by all agencies having financial responsibility for the child. A difficult-to-place child under the agreement will be an elementary or secondary student not over 18 years old who is developmentally disabled and in need of special education as defined by law; the child also must have been found to be delinquent, seriously mentally ill, a youth in need of supervision, a youth in need of care, or a developmentally disabled child with special needs who is individually approved by all agencies. An initial list of difficult-to-place children will be agreed to by all agencies by May 30, 1988, and each agency shall identify funds to provide for difficult-to-place children.

For more information about the agreement or the interagency committee created to implement the agreement, call or write Bob Runkel, Special Education Director, Office of Public Instruction, State Capitol, Room 106, Helena, MT 59620, 444-4429.

U.S. Department of Education Focuses On Promising Programs in Math, Science, Critical Foreign Languages

In October 1987 the U.S. Department of Education contracted with COSMOS Corporation to conduct a year-long study of school district efforts to improve the academic development of economically disadvantaged, highly able students in science, mathematics, and critical foreign languages. Out of 75 candidates districts identified, nine programs representing a range of approaches and regional variations were selected to be the subject of intensive case studies. A final report on these programs will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in September 1988 and may contribute to the improvement of education for Montana's economically disadvantaged, highly able students. We will keep Montana educators informed about the availability of this report.

Teacher Exams Scheduled

Included with this issue is a flyer announcing a special National Teacher Exam to be held in September. Please post this notice. The next regular test date is June 25, 1988. For additional information on either test, contact the people listed on the special testing notice.

Final Recommendations on State-by-State Assessment Made to U.S. Education Department

A national study panel convened by the Council of Chief State School Officers has released recommendations on how to conduct the mathematics portion of the first state-by-state administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The project, supported by the Education Department and the National Science Foundation, calls for assessing samples of students on common subject matter at the 4th, 8th and 12th grade levels within each state by 1990.

The reports on the math assessment make recommendations on content topics, use of calculators on the test, procedures for including special education students and youngsters with limited proficiency in English, administration of the tests by school district employees, reporting achievement scores from non-public school students, and how state achievement data from the 1990 math assessment should be measured, compared and reported.

The purpose of the planning project is to address questions of major interest to state and local educators and policy makers who must decide prior to 1990 whether their state will participate in the expanded NAEP. A state assessment will require a minimum sample of 2,000 students in a state in each grade level assessed.

Math/Science Money Up

Not all the news regarding funding for education is bad. The U.S. Department of Education has released figures showing that the funding for Title II of EESA, the math/science legislation, has been increased 50 percent over last year. For Montana, this means that $540,000 will be available for staff development in the area of mathematics and science, $378,000 for elementary and secondary schools and $162,000 to institutions of higher education to develop staff development programs for elementary and secondary teachers. With carryover funding from 1987-88, an estimated $300,000 may be available to local districts. Funds are distributed on a per student allocation based on total students in the district and the number of students served in Chapter 1 programs.

All monies available under this program must be spent for staff development in the area of mathematics and/or science. No money is available for classroom equipment or instructional supplies unless directly related to an inservice program. While computer education and foreign language are included in the legislation, funds may not be expended on these subject areas until all staff development needs in mathematics and science are met and a waiver is obtained from the state office.

Information and district applications were mailed to schools in late April. Watch for this material; in the past two years many districts have failed to apply for these funds.

If you need additional information, contact Bob Briggs, Science Specialist, 444-4439, or Dan Dolan, Mathematics Specialist, 444-4436.

National Math Meeting in Montana

A western regional math conference sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics will be held in Helena on March 2-4, 1989. Over 200 sectionals and workshops will be presented by national and regional math leaders. Nine special mini-courses also will be part of the program. A district can register its staff at a substantial savings: Instead of an individual rate of $25/person, the district can register its math staff, secondary and/or elementary, for $9/person. There will be no better math inservice available in the state next year than this outstanding conference. In planning for use of math-science monies, districts should keep this in mind. For information regarding special registration rates, contact Dan Dolan, Mathematics/Computer Education Specialist, 444-4436.

Calendar

May 16—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Kalispell. Flathead High School, 7:00 p.m.

May 17—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Missoula. Lewis & Clark Gymnasium, 7:00 p.m.

May 18—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Butte. Butte High School Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

May 18-20—MT Special Olympics Summer Games, Billings. Don Byers, 791-2368.

May 19—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Billings. West High School Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

May 24—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Great Falls. West Elementary, 7:00 p.m.

May 25—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Wolf Point. Wolf Point High School Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

May 26—Project Excellence Public Hearing, Miles City. Custer Co. High School Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

MISSING CHILDREN INFORMATION

The following is the State Dept. of Justice's most current list of missing Montana children and teenagers (age 17 and under). For details on the Missing Children Program, call Bill Erwin, Dept. of Justice, Helena, 444-3625. (PD=Police Dept.; SO=Sheriff's Office; TP=Tribal Police). Also, if you are uncertain about the status of a student in your school who is not on this list, call the Dept. of Justice.

NAME	SEX	RACE	DOB	AGE	HT/WT	HAIR	EYES	STATION
Hankins, Jeremy J.	M	W	032681	7	300/50	BRO	BLU	Dept. of Justice
Hickbottom, Jennifer	F	W	041772	15	507/120	BRO	GRN	Polson
Hunt, Tina Gail	F	W	071272	15	504/120	BLN	BRO	Missoula
Matt, Wendy	F	I	052170	17	504/115	BLK	BRO	Polson
McCann, Tina	F	W	051871	16	506/46	BRO	GRN	Billings
Robertson, Kimberly	F	W	082770	17	502/130	BLN	BLU	Deer Lodge
Schneider, Alda BJ	F	W	081570	17	500/95	BLN	BLU	Froid
Smith, Hope	F	W	092572	15	501/125	BRO	BRO	Helena
Spade, Janet	F	W	100571	16	504/150	BLN	HAZ	Polson
Stevens, Joshua	M	W	042572	15	504/125	BLN	HAZ	Bozeman
Stinger, Dorian	M	W	061578	10	406/68	BRO	BRO	Billings
Stinger, Mercedes	F	W	073180	8	311/50	BLN	BLU	Billings
Wiedecker, Charles	M	W	030382	6	306/46	BRO	BLU	Dept. of Justice
Wiedecker, Robin	F	W	100979	9	311/50	BLN	BLU	Dept. of Justice

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